

**Conference for Teachers of all Modern Languages in Higher Education Institutions**

**“The Implementation of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in UK Higher Education Institutions – Chances and Challenges”**

**24 November 2006, 9.30am-5pm**



**Queen Mary**  
University of London



# Introduction

Plurilingualism and linguistic diversity are the key words in any discussion about Europe. One strategy to foster language learning and a mutual understanding between its member states is and has been the Common European Framework, an initiative devised by the Council of Europe.

In collaboration with various (international) institutions, the conference aims at analysing its significance and practicality in terms of language teaching at higher education level. Is the CEFR a straitjacket, or is it a progressive approach on language learning and teaching?

The CEFR could be a useful tool for setting clear-cut standards in the language learning process and could offer both educational and occupational mobility for speakers of foreign languages in an open European market. Universities and HE institutions might take advantage of the European Language Portfolio as a marketing strategy to attract more students to study languages and provide them with an internationally recognised certificate of proficiency. Critical voices, however, claim that the Framework is “failing learners”, which makes a discussion about its chances and challenges even more relevant to our everyday language teaching. Two panel sessions with leading experts and practitioners from international institutions will round off this discussion.

**Venue:** Sir Christopher France House Common Room, School of Modern Languages, Queen Mary, University of London, Mile End Road, London E1 4NS

**Speakers include:**

- Alan Dobson
- Marta Nunez, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- Maggie Höffgen, Goethe-Institut Prüfungszentrum Manchester
- Glenn Fulcher, Leicester University
- Fred Davidson, University of Illinois



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# Programme

## 9.30-10.15am

Registration, coffee / tea and biscuits

## 10.15-10.30am

Welcome and Introduction by Trevor Dadson, Vice-Principal of Queen Mary, Peter Evans, Head of the School of Modern Languages, Queen Mary

## 10.30-11.15am

Alan Dobson, *"The Common European Framework and the European Language Portfolio - Origins and Intentions"*.

## 11.15-11.30pm

Coffee / tea and biscuits

## 11.30am-12.15pm

Marta Nunez, Foreign and Commonwealth Office: *"The Common European Framework applied to European languages and beyond. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office experience"*

## 12.15-1.00pm

Maggie Höffgen, Goethe-Institut Prüfungszentrum Manchester: *"The CEFR and teaching German at the University of Manchester Language Centre: A comparison between Goethe-Institut and University-wide Language Courses"*

## 1-1.45pm

Lunch: own arrangements. There are various cafés, bars and restaurants on and near the campus.

## 1.45-2.30pm

Glenn Fulcher, University of Leicester: *"Test Architecture: Models, Frameworks and Specifications"*

## 2.30-3.15pm

Fred Davidson, University of Illinois: *"DIY? The Architecture and Building Codes of Language Test Development"*

## 3.15-3.45pm

Coffee / tea and biscuits

## 3.45-4.45pm

Discussion panel

## from 4.45pm

Reception



# The School of Modern Languages

[www.modern-languages.qmul.ac.uk](http://www.modern-languages.qmul.ac.uk)

## About us

### Comparative Literature

Comparative literature is all about making connections – between literary texts of different times, places and traditions, as well as between literature and film, music, the visual arts and popular culture. Now available for the first time as a joint honours programme in combination with a Language (French, German, Russian or Hispanic Studies), Film, History or Linguistics, this new and innovative programme offers students a chance to explore the literatures and cultures of Europe, Latin America and beyond. Our courses cover literature from the Classical period to the twenty-first century, and explore a whole range of themes, genres and movements across national and cultural boundaries.

### Film

[www.modern-languages.qmul.ac.uk/filmstudies/](http://www.modern-languages.qmul.ac.uk/filmstudies/)

Film Studies at Queen Mary introduces students to a range of international cinema movements, figures, texts and theories. We have a particular expertise in European film, with courses on British, Italian, Spanish and French cinema, and students spend up to one quarter of their time on practice-based courses, with lots of opportunity to shoot, edit and produce their own films. Film Studies is available at undergraduate level (where it can be combined with French, German, Hispanic Studies and Russian) and postgraduate level (through the MA in Film and PhD supervision). We benefit greatly from our position in Central London, where there is

a higher concentration of film producers, specialist film events and cinema venues than anywhere else in the UK.

### French

[www.modern-languages.qmul.ac.uk/french/](http://www.modern-languages.qmul.ac.uk/french/)

*Bienvenue au département de Français!*

The French department offers a wide range of exciting courses in the French language, literature, art, thought and film. Topics studied range from the Renaissance to the present day, and include women's writing, modern art, children's literature, early modern thought and translation studies. Students spend the third year of their studies in a French-speaking country as an English assistant or a student: we currently have students in Paris, Aix, Brussels, Martinique, Senegal and many other places.





## German

[www.modern-languages.qmul.ac.uk/german/](http://www.modern-languages.qmul.ac.uk/german/)  
[www.modern-languages.qmul.ac.uk/research/anglogerman/](http://www.modern-languages.qmul.ac.uk/research/anglogerman/)

Within the enlarged European Union, the German language plays an increasingly influential role as a *lingua franca*, particularly in Eastern Europe. Within the UK, German companies are now the main non-British employers. Both factors condition and reflect the significance of German culture today; its in-depth study is our academic and pedagogic objective.

One hundred years of German teaching at Queen Mary represents a truly special tradition. We honour it by research-based high quality teaching that subscribes to continuity and innovation. Both are reflected in the German programmes of study that range from medieval literature to the contemporary German language culture, including German for business, from German drama studies, Swiss and Austrian literature to the literary representations of music and visual arts. Academic colleagues in the



German Department are research leaders in their respective fields of expertise. The teaching environment and departmental research culture benefit from the UK's only *Centre for Anglo-German Cultural Relations*, regular lecture series and research seminars as well as a writer-in-residence programme.

## Hispanic Studies

[www.modern-languages.qmul.ac.uk/hispstudies/](http://www.modern-languages.qmul.ac.uk/hispstudies/)

Spanish and Portuguese are two of the world's fastest-growing and most widely-spoken languages, and Catalan is a language of great importance in contemporary Spain. Hispanic Studies at Queen Mary covers all these three languages and their vibrant and exciting cultures in Europe and Latin America, ranging from the medieval Castilian epic Poem of the Cid to the grittiness of the Brazilian favelas in the film *City*



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*of God.* Our programme is extremely flexible (though Spanish language is compulsory) and allows you to enter as a total beginner in Spanish, post-GCSE, post-A-level, or as a native speaker.

We have just celebrated 50 years of teaching Spanish to degree level, and the Department is one of the very highest rated in the UK for both teaching and research.

## Linguistics

**[www.modern-languages.qmul.ac.uk/linguistics/](http://www.modern-languages.qmul.ac.uk/linguistics/)**

Language is central to almost all aspects of human life: communicating with each other; thinking and reasoning; creating social relations; passing on the thoughts, ideas and discoveries of the past to future generations. Linguistics is simply the study of language in all of its aspects.

Here at Queen Mary, we have a special focus on the grammatical, meaning-related and sound structures of language in general, and on the way that people actually use language in different kinds of situations. Each of these different approaches complements the other. The Department is consistently ranked within the top three in the UK for teaching and research. Our courses range from the Linguistics of Storytelling and Language and Gender to Explaining Grammatical Structure, Formal Semantics and Psycholinguistics.



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# Queen Mary, University of London

Queen Mary is one of the largest multi-faculty colleges within the University of London with a strong focus on high-quality teaching and research. It has over 11,500 UK and international students studying in four faculties, as well as Barts and The London, Queen Mary's School of Medicine and Dentistry. Of these, more than 1,600 are following postgraduate courses and undertaking research.

Queen Mary is in the top 100 in the latest world university rankings, published by *The Times Higher Education Supplement*. The College is also in Europe's top 50 universities, ranked at 41.

The College was also ranked as one of London's top ten universities in *The Sunday Times University Guide 2006*. Seven of Queen Mary's departments were rated as 'excellent': Dentistry; English; Geography; Modern Languages; Molecular Biosciences; Organismal Biosciences and Politics. Queen Mary is also ranked in the top ten for both 'best student/staff ratio' and 'highest graduate starting salaries' – with average starting salaries of £20,902.

In the *Guardian University Guide*, the Department of Physics was rated number one in the country, with fourteen other departments in the top 20. Dentistry, Drama, Economics, Engineering, History, Law, Materials and Modern Languages are all ranked in the top ten for their subject.

It has an established history of postgraduate study and research, which has evolved in response to the demands of postgraduate students. With over 80 per cent of research staff working in departments where research is of national or international excellence (Research Assessment Exercise 2001), the College has a vibrant research community that reflects the cutting edge work of its academic staff.

## Facilities

Queen Mary is London's only campus-based university, located close to the financial districts of Canary Wharf and the City of London, and just 15 minutes away from central London.

It offers integrated library and computing services which recognise the diverse needs of students by providing specialist subject librarians and offering 24-hour access to computers. The Library's collections at graduate level reflect the development and direction of research in the College over the years with extensive material covering the humanities; law; medicine; areas of natural sciences; engineering; mathematics; computer science and the social sciences. The newly opened Learning Resource Centre has 200 networked PCs and is open to students around the clock.

The College has a strong ethos of personal support: it provides a Careers Service, a Counselling and Advice Centre, and a Crèche. In addition, you will find ample provision of bars, cafés, restaurants and shops including a travel centre, bookshop and a bank. There are sports facilities including gym, sports hall and more, and, of course, the Student Union.

**This guide has been produced by  
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